



# **History, the Law, the Courts, the Lawyers of Maine: From Its First Colonization to the Early Part of the Present Century (Classic Reprint)**

*William Willis*

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Excerpt from History, the Law, the Courts, the Lawyers of Maine: From Its First Colonization to the Early Part of the Present Century

The present work originated in the preparation of a lecture for the Maine Historical Society, in which I proposed to present brief sketches of the early lawyers, with anecdotes of the bar, in Maine. The materials became so copious that they stretched far beyond the limits of a discourse, and have assumed the shape in which they now appear.

I had for a long time desired that some aged member of our bar would collect and preserve, for the instruction and amusement of his brethren and successors in the profession, reminiscences of the early lawyers and practice, as well as of the usages which prevailed at the bar, in former days. I had hoped that Judge Mellen, who was very free and felicitous with his pen, and was more familiar with these subjects, with perhaps one exception, than any of our old lawyers, would have favored the profession with his recollections and observations, during the half century in which he was an active and leading member of the profession. Or that Judge Whitman, who had a similar experience, and a keen relish for the curious anecdotes, the peculiar customs and racy jokes, which lingered around the courts, and in the memory of the old practitioners, long after the eccentric characters, who had not only wit in themselves, but were the cause of wit in others, had passed to a higher bar, would have rendered this service. But these honored brethren were unwilling to undertake the task of transmitting these valuable memorials.

Solicitor General Davis, more competent perhaps, than any one, kindly replied to my letters.

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